

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL TRIESTE
AMCONSUL TURIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 5394

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: PREVIEW OF 41ST SOCIALIST PARTY CONGRESS

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE 41ST SOCIALIST PARTY CONGRESS WILL BE
HELD IN TURIN ON MARCH 29 - APRIL 2. THE EVENT WILL
PRIMARILY MARK A POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN PARTY SECRETARY
CRAXI AND THE FACTIONS WHICH OPPOSE HIM. BEHIND THE
FACTIONAL DISPUTE WILL BE THE HISTORIC ISSUE WHICH HAS
FACED THE SOCIALIST PARTY SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR:
THE PARTY'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNISTS. CRAXI WILL
WIN THE BATTLE OF TURIN BUT THE SOCIALIST HUNDRED YEARS
WAR WILL GO ON. END SUMMARY.

1. THE SOCIALISTS WILL HOLD A PARTY CONGRESS IN TURIN
ON MARCH 29 - APRIL 2. THE FIRST CONGRESS HAVING BEEN
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HELD IN GENOA IN 1892, THIS SESSION WILL BE THE 41ST
SUCH ASSEMBLY. THE FORMAL PURPOSE OF THE CONGRESS
WILL BE TO DETERMINE THE PARTY'S OVERALL POLICY, ADOPT
A NEW PROGRAM AND ELECT A NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE. BEYOND
THESE FORMAL OBJECTIVES THE SESSION IS INTENDED BY
PARTY SECRETARY CRAXI, AT WHOSE INSISTENCE IT IS
BEING HELD, TO GAIN FOR HIMSELF AND HIS ALLIES GREATER

CONTROL OF THE PARTY'S ORGANIZATION OF WHICH HE HAS NOT BEEN MUCH MORE THAN TITULAR LEADER FOR THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF. THE MEETING WILL ALSO MARK A SHOWDOWN AMONG THE VARIOUS FACTIONS OVER THE PARTY'S FUTURE POLITICAL COURSE. WHAT IS ULTIMATELY AT ISSUE HERE IS THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

THE CONTESTANTS

2. THE CONTESTANTS IN THE FRAY WILL BE THE PRESENT CONSTELLATION OF PARTY FACTIONS, OF WHICH THERE ARE FIVE. THESE ARE, ALONG WITH THEIR CURRENT STRENGTH IN THE PRESENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE: NENNI-CRAXI - 68 MEMBERS; LOMBARDI-SIGNORILE - 25 MEMBERS; DE MARTINO-MANCA - 48 MEMBERS; MANCINI - 19 MEMBERS; AND ACHILLI - 5 MEMBERS. (THERE ARE THREE INDEPENDENTS.)

3. CRAXI HAS RECENTLY ENJOYED A MARKED UPSURGE IN SUPPORT ON THE REGIONAL LEVEL, PARTICULARLY IN THE NORTH. HIS FACTION HAS ALSO RECENTLY GAINED A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT DEFECTORS FROM OTHER FACTIONS--GIOLITTI, MOSCA, ARFE, PEDRAZZOLI, VITTORELLI AND ANIASI. VITAL TO CRAXI'S POSITION IS HIS ALLIANCE WITH THE LOMBARDI-SIGNORILE FACTION, A RELATIONSHIP KNOWN IN PARTY CIRCLES AS THE "CRAXI-SIGNORILE AXIS." IT IS A STRANGE CONFIDENTIAL

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ALLIANCE, JOINING THE TRADITIONAL LEFT (LOMBARDI-SIGNORILE) WITH THE FURTHEST RIGHT OF THE FACTIONS, THAT OF NENNI AND CRAXI.

4. VOTING AT THE CONGRESS WILL BE BY REGIONALLY-ELECTED DELEGATES AND, BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE VOTING IN THE REGIONAL CONGRESSES ALREADY HELD, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT CRAXI-SIGNORILE WILL HAVE AT LEAST 55 PERCENT TO 65 PERCENT OF THE DELEGATES BEHIND THEM AT TURIN.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 5394

THE ISSUES

5. THE KEY DEBATE AND VOTE WILL BE ON FOUR ALTERNATIVE
MOTIONS WHICH WILL BE TABLED BY THE MAJOR PARTY FACTIONS.
THE MOTIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN DRAFTED AND REPRESENT
THE ESSENTIAL POLITICAL LINE OF EACH GROUP. THE
NENNI-CRAXI AND LOMBARDI-SIGNORILE FACTIONS HAVE
JOINED IN PROPOSING A SINGLE MOTION WHICH ADVOCATES
THE HISTORIC, "AUTONOMIST" COURSE--THAT IS, ALLIANCE
WITH BUT AUTONOMY FROM THE COMMUNIST PARTY. CURRENTLY
IT FAVORS HAVING THE COMMUNISTS IN THE MAJORITY BUT
NOT IN THE GOVERNMENT. THE DE MARTINO-MANCA FACTION HAS
PROPOSED A MOTION WHICH ADVOCATES A CLOSE ALLIANCE
WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND FAVORS SOCIALIST AND
COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT AT ONCE. (ALONE
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OF THE MOTIONS THIS ONE MENTIONS THE UNITED STATES,
STATING; "THE PSI REJECTS ANY AMERICAN INFLUENCE
IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL RELATIONS
AND EMPHASIZES THAT SUCH INTERFERENCE MANIFESTS AN
ALARMING COINCIDENCE WITH SOVIET INTEREST IN PREVENTING
OR SLOWING DOWN THROUGHOUT EUROPE THE PROCESS OF
UNIFYING THE LEFT....") THE MOTION OF THE MANCINI
FACTION IS IN SUBSTANCE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME
AS THAT OF DE MARTINO-MANCA. THE ACHILLI FACTION,

THE "NEW LEFT," HAS PROPOSED A MOTION WHICH LOOKS FORWARD TO JOINT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES BETWEEN THE PARTIES OF THE LEFT TO INTRODUCE SWEEPING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES IN ORDER TO CREATE A MORE DEMOCRATIC ITALY.

THE PROGRAM

6. THE PROGRAM TO BE PROPOSED TO THE CONGRESS HAS BEEN DRAFTED LARGELY BY CRAXI PROTEGES AND IS INTENDED TO DIFFERENTIATE SOCIALIST FROM COMMUNIST POSITIONS. FRANKLY REVISIONIST, IT REJECTS LENINISM, WITHDRAWS FROM MARXISM AND LOOKS TO THE WEST RATHER THAN TO THE EAST FOR THE PARTY'S POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL LINKS. IT REJECTS COMPREHENSIVE CENTRAL PLANNING AND SEEKS TO COME TO TERMS WITH A PROSPEROUS CONSUMER SOCIETY. THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN ATTACKED BY DE MARTINO, MANCA AND MANCINI ESSENTIALLY AS A BETRAYAL OF THE PARTY'S MARXIST TRADITION AND DOCTRINE AND AS INCONSISTENT WITH THE PARTY'S POLICY OF ALLIANCE WITH THE COMMUNISTS.

CONGRESS DELIBERATIONS

7. WITH CRAXI SET TO WIN THE VOTE ON THE VARIOUS
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MOTIONS AS WELL AS ON THE PROGRAM AND ON THE NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE, THE POINT OF INTEREST AT THE CONGRESS WILL CONCERN THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS: HOW DIVISIVE THE DEBATE WILL BE; BY WHAT MARGIN CRAXI WILL WIN; HOW STRONG AND IRRECONCILABLE THE OPPOSITION FACTIONS WILL EMERGE FROM THE CONGRESS; AND HOW STRONG THE CRAXI-SIGNORILE AXIS WILL PROVE TO BE. BUT AT THE VERY LEAST CRAXI SHOULD ACHIEVE AT THE CONGRESS ESSENTIALLY WHAT HE WANTED IN SUMMONING IT--A PARTY PROGRAM AND POLICY TO HIS LIKING AS WELL AS REGIONAL COMMITTEES, A CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND (SUBSEQUENTLY) A PARTY DIRECTORATE AND SECRETARIAT IN HIS CONTROL.

8. ITALIAN HISTORY SHOWS THAT WHILE SOCIALIST BATTLES MAY BE WON, SOCIALIST WARS NEVER ARE. THE LOSING FACTIONS BIDE THEIR TIME TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY. THE PARAMOUNT ISSUE IS THEREFORE WHETHER CRAXI WILL DO SUFFICIENTLY WELL TO BE IN EFFECTIVE COMMAND OF HIS PARTY AND TO SET IT FIRMLY ON AN "AUTONOMOUS" COURSE DURING THE COMING DIFFICULT PERIOD IN ITALIAN POLITICS. GARDNER

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